

REVIEW ARTICLE

Engineering Zeolitic and Nanostructured Molecular Sieves for Selective Catalysis: Structural Insights and Synthetic Strategies

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Abstract

Molecular sieves, particularly zeolites, are crystalline aluminosilicates with precisely defined pore structures that enable size- and shape-selective catalysis. Their unique three-dimensional frameworks, composed of interconnected channels and cavities, offer high thermal stability, ion-exchange capacity, and tunable hydrophilic–hydrophobic properties, making them essential materials in petrochemical, fine chemical, and environmental processes. This review provides a comprehensive overview of zeolitic and nanostructured

molecular sieves, emphasizing structure–property relationships, framework topology, and acidity as key determinants of catalytic activity. Advances in synthesis strategies, including hydrothermal crystallization, nanocasting, surfactant-assisted assembly, and hierarchical structuring, are highlighted, with a focus on tailoring morphology, porosity, and chemical composition to enhance performance. Catalytic applications discussed range from fluid catalytic cracking and light olefin production to selective alkylation, isomerization, and aromatic substitution, where materials such as ZSM-5, MCM-22, MCM-56, and ZSM-22 exhibit outstanding activity, selectivity, and durability. By integrating nanoscale engineering approaches with traditional zeolite chemistry, molecular sieves continue to evolve as versatile and high-performance catalysts, reinforcing their industrial significance and opening avenues for next-generation catalytic systems.

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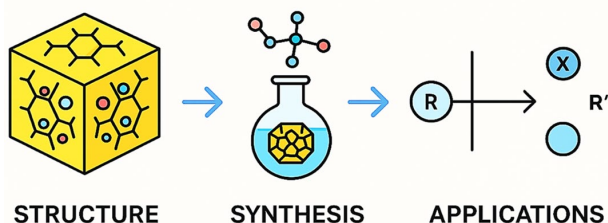
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Graphical Abstract



Introduction to Molecular Sieves

A molecular sieve is a porous material, generally an artificial or natural zeolite, that separates particles of molecular dimension. Zeolites are well-defined crystalline hydrated metal aluminosilicate complexes. The silicate and aluminate groups create three-dimensional crystal lattices that enclose voids containing metal ions and water molecules. Channels travel the length of the crystal, connecting the cavities and ending at the crystal surface. When heated, zeolites lose their water content while retaining their crystal structure. Dehydrated zeolites can absorb water or other molecules tiny enough to pass through the channels or pores reversibly.

Zeolite structures are composed of a variety of distinct framework units. The β -type truncated octahedral cage represents one of the fundamental building blocks, while the δ -type double eight-membered ring (D8R) unit consists of two interconnected eight-membered rings, enhancing channel connectivity. Similarly, the double six-membered ring (D6R) unit contributes to structural stability and pore arrangement. The ϵ -type cancrinite framework features a cage-like arrangement commonly found in cancrinite minerals. Variants of the sodalite cage exist, including both a modified sodalite structure and the classic β -type sodalite cage, which are central to zeolite crystallography. Another important unit is the α -type truncated cuboctahedral cage, a large cavity that facilitates

Key Words: Zeolitic molecular sieves; Catalysis; Hydrothermal synthesis; Nanocasting; Isomerization; Alkylation; Pore structure; Shape selectivity

molecular diffusion. Framework diversity extends to the levynite cage, erionite unit, and γ -type gmelinite cage, each defining unique channel systems and pore geometries. Finally, the chabazite cage is a characteristic unit that contributes to the high selectivity and adsorption properties of zeolites. Together, these structural motifs create the intricate pore networks that underpin the catalytic, ion-exchange, and adsorption capabilities of zeolitic materials [1]. Figure 1 represents the structural units of zeolite molecular sieves.

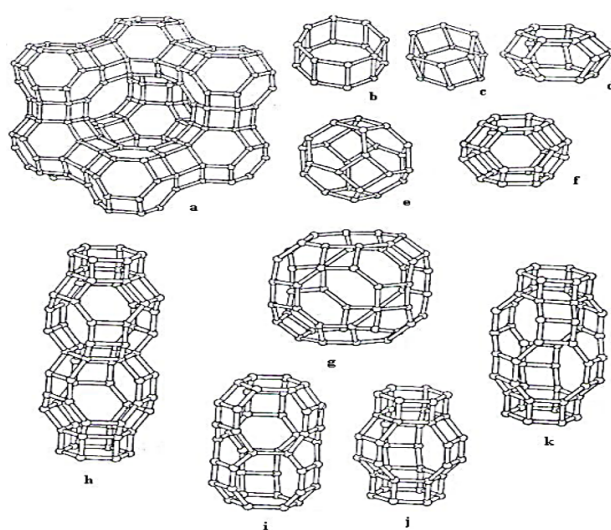


Figure 1 Representation of structural units of zeolite molecular sieves a) Truncated octahedral (β) unit; b) Paired 8-membered ring (δ) unit; c) Paired 6-membered ring structure; d) Cancrinite (ϵ) framework unit; e) Variant sodalite cage; f) Classic sodalite (β) cage; g) Truncated cuboctahedral (α) framework; h) Levynite-type cage; i) Erionite framework unit; j) Gmelinite (γ) cage; k) Chabazite cage [1].

Molecular sieves are used to separate molecules based on their sizes and shapes as well as to dry gases and liquids. When two molecules of

identical size may fit through the pores, they are separated depending on their charge separation (polarity), such as more polar molecules are being more readily adsorbed [2]. Molecule sieves can be used as carriers or catalysts because of their acidity and selectivity to molecular size. Molecular sieve catalyst is a catalyst containing molecular sieve as the catalytically active component or the principal active component [3]. Ion exchange performance, homogeneous molecular size holes, outstanding acid catalytic activity, and strong thermal and hydrothermal stability are all characteristics of molecular sieves. The high-silica zeolite has a strong affinity for organic molecules [4]. In contrast, low-silica zeolite exhibits hydrophilicity due to its Lewis and Bronsted acid properties [5].

There are often eight-membered rings (0.4-0.5 nm), ten-membered rings (0.5-0.6 nm), and twelve-membered rings (0.7-0.9 nm) with molecular sieve effect. There are twelve-membered oxygen rings in mordenite ($x=9-11$) and Y-type molecular sieves ($x=3.1-6.0$). While the latter may be used as a toluene disproportionation catalyst, the former can be exploited as both a cracking and a dual-function catalyst. There are various ZSM (Zeolite Socony Mobil) series molecular sieves with ten-membered oxygen rings, including ZSM-5 and ZSM-11. The T-type molecular sieve, ZSM-34, and A-type molecular sieve ($x=2$) make up the eight-membered oxygen ring. Because of their tiny pores, only straight-chain hydrocarbons can pass through them [6-8]. Structural types of zeolitic molecular sieves and their pore characteristics are shown in Table 1.

TABLE 1

Structural types of zeolitic molecular sieves and their pore characteristics.

Zeolite type	Pore size/ring size	Framework code	Key properties	Typical applications
Mordenite	0.7–0.9 nm / 12-membered ring	MOR	High thermal stability, strong acidity, hydrophobic character	Catalytic cracking, toluene disproportionation
Y-type zeolite	0.74 nm / 12-membered ring	FAU	Large pores, high surface area, tunable acidity	FCC catalysts, hydrocracking
ZSM-5	0.5–0.6 nm / 10-membered ring	MFI	Shape selectivity, high silica/alumina ratio, hydrophobic	Aromatic alkylation, isomerization, para-selective reactions
ZSM-11	0.53 nm / 10-membered ring	MEL	Similar to ZSM-5, but different channel connectivity	Aromatic transformations, xylene isomerization
ZSM-34	0.4–0.5 nm / 8-membered ring	ERI	Small pore size, high selectivity for straight-chain hydrocarbons	Light paraffin separation, gas drying
MCM-22	0.71 × 0.56 nm and 0.4 nm	MWW	Dual pore system, regenerable, high stability	Liquid-phase alkylation of benzene, ethylbenzene production
MCM-56	Similar to MCM-22	MWW	High activity, low deactivation rate	Short-chain alkyl-substituted aromatic synthesis
ZSM-22	0.52 × 0.45 nm / 10-membered ring	TON	One-dimensional pores, high selectivity	Butene skeletal isomerization, n-heptane isomerization

Molecular sieves, particularly zeolites, derive their exceptional adsorption, ion-exchange, and catalytic properties from their highly ordered crystalline frameworks and uniform pore structures. The diversity of structural units, such as truncated octahedral, cuboctahedral, and ring-based frameworks, enables precise control over pore size, connectivity, and surface chemistry. These characteristics allow zeolites to act as highly selective materials for molecular separation and catalysis, making them indispensable in industrial, environmental, and energy-related applications. A comprehensive understanding of their framework architecture provides the foundation for designing advanced nanostructured molecular sieves with enhanced functionality and performance. This paper provides only a brief overview of the latest data on zeolite molecular sieves, without claiming to be exhaustive on the topic and its analysis.

Synthesis methods of molecular sieves

According to Yan Y, SR Chaudhuri and coworkers, Tetrapropylammonium Bromide (TPABr, Aldrich) is used as an organic structure-directing agent and tetraethyl ortho silicate (TEOS, Aldrich) as a silica source in the hydrothermal synthesis of Si-ZSM-5 crystal molecular sieves [9]. Fused silica glass that has been polished on both sides and measures 25 x 50 mm serves as the substrate for producing zeolite crystals. Three substrates are put in a Teflon holder, spaced 10 mm apart and facing one another. Before being added to a precursor reactant solution, this set of substrates is first treated in an ultrasonic bath comprising 1

2-propanol-2 ethanol-2 water-0.1 HCl for 15 minutes. After cleaning, the substrates are then washed with deionized water and blow-dried with nitrogen.

Liu Q, et al in 2006 described for the first time the synthesis of OCAMS-1, or ordered crystalline alumina molecular sieves, by carefully planning a series of nanocasting methods and monitoring the experimental process [10]. The stiff template was a highly organized mesoporous carbon CMK-3 reproduced from SBA-15. The resultant OCAMS-1 showed crystalline $-Al_2O_3$ framework walls and well organized hexagonal mesopores identical to those of its parent template SBA-15.

Joo SH, and colleagues research studies shown in that, Pure silica MCM-48 samples were obtained following the recently developed facile synthesis method, which used Na silicate ($Si/Na=2$) and cationic–nonionic surfactant mixtures [11]. Corma A and ME Davis in 2004 described that hydrothermal synthesis methods are often used to synthesize microporous, crystalline molecular sieves [12]. Zeolites typically crystallized by using water, a source of T atoms (for example, colloidal silica, fumed silica, and/or silicon alkoxides for TSi_4^+), a mineralizing agent (OH and/or F), and a Structure-Directing Agent (SDA). Over time, the structures assemble, once the reagents have been combined (usually at temperatures below 200 degrees). Synthesis methods of zeolitic and nanostructured molecular sieves are given in Table 2.

TABLE 2

Synthesis methods of zeolitic and nanostructured molecular sieves.

Method	Template/directing agent	Silica/alumina source	Conditions	Advantages	Limitations
Hydrothermal synthesis of Si-ZSM-5	Tetrapropylammonium bromide (TPABr)	Tetraethyl orthosilicate (TEOS)	~200°C, autoclave, several hours to days	Good crystallinity, controllable morphology	Long synthesis time, organic templates costly
Nanocasting (OCAMS-1)	Mesoporous carbon CMK-3	Alumina precursors	Replication from SBA-15, calcination	Uniform mesopores, crystalline alumina walls	Multi-step process, template removal required
Surfactant-assisted synthesis (MCM-48)	Cationic–nonionic surfactant mixtures	Sodium silicate	Moderate temp, room pressure	Simple, good pore order	Limited thermal stability
Classical hydrothermal (microporous zeolites)	Organic SDA (varies)	Colloidal silica, fumed silica, silicon alkoxides	<200°C, mineralizing agent OH ⁻ /F ⁻	Versatile, various framework densities	Requires post-synthesis removal of SDA

Working principle of zeolites (molecular sieves)

Zeolites operate as highly selective adsorbents and catalysts because of their unique crystalline aluminosilicate framework, which contains a uniform network of pores and cavities of molecular dimensions (typically 3–10 Å). These pores act like precision filters, allowing only molecules small enough to fit through the channels to enter, while excluding larger ones as shown in Figure 2. This size-selective adsorption was first observed in natural chabazite, which demonstrated the ability to adsorb only molecules below a certain cross-sectional diameter. At the atomic level, the zeolite framework consists of interconnected tetrahedral units of silicon and aluminum atoms linked by oxygen atoms, creating a negatively charged lattice. This negative charge is balanced by cations (e.g., Na⁺, K⁺, Ca²⁺), which can be exchanged, giving zeolites ion-exchange properties in addition to adsorption [1].

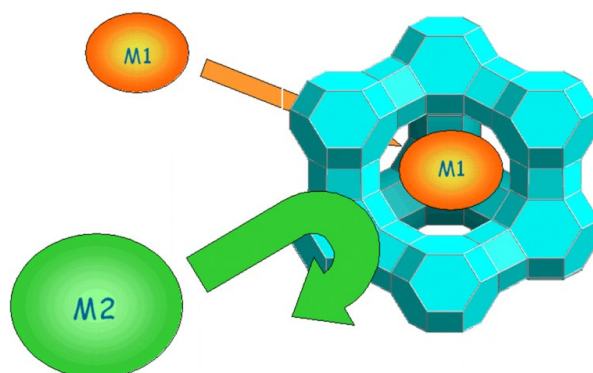


Figure 2) Schematic representation of how molecular sieves work [1].

The presence of well-defined cages and channels not only enables molecular sieving but also provides a high surface area for catalytic reactions. When a gas or liquid mixture passes through a zeolite, smaller molecules diffuse into the micropores and are selectively adsorbed, while larger molecules are excluded due to steric hindrance. This selective adsorption is reversible; heating or applying a vacuum releases the trapped molecules, regenerating the zeolite for reuse. Because of this property, zeolites are widely applied in drying gases and liquids, purifying chemicals, separating

hydrocarbons, removing toxins, and catalyzing industrial reactions such as cracking and isomerization. In essence, zeolites act as molecular-scale “filters,” combining shape selectivity, ion exchange, and catalytic activity, making them invaluable in chemical processing, environmental remediation, and energy storage systems.

Nanostructuring strategies for enhanced catalytic performance of molecular sieves

The development of nanostructured molecular sieves has gained significant attention due to their enhanced catalytic performance, which arises from increased surface area, improved accessibility of active sites, and unique nanoscale properties. Nanostructuring approaches aim to optimize the size, shape, and composition of zeolitic materials to tailor their catalytic behavior for specific applications.

Synthesis of nanocrystalline zeolites: Nanocrystalline zeolites are synthesized by controlling nucleation and crystal growth during the hydrothermal or solvothermal synthesis processes. The reduction in crystal size to the nanoscale level enhances external surface area and reduces diffusion limitations of reactants and products within the pores. Techniques such as using Structure-Directing Agents (SDAs), surfactants, and additives like organic amines or polymers play a crucial role in promoting the formation of nanocrystals. Additionally, rapid nucleation followed by controlled growth allows the formation of uniform nanocrystals with narrow size distributions, which is vital for achieving consistent catalytic properties [13].

Methods for controlling particle size and morphology: Controlling particle size and morphology is essential to maximize the catalytic efficiency of molecular sieves.

Several approaches are used to fine-tune these parameters, including:

- **Variation of synthesis parameters:** Adjusting temperature, time, pH, and precursor concentrations influences crystal growth rates and morphology [14].
- **Use of templates and surfactants:** Soft templates such as micelles or hard templates like mesoporous silica can direct the shape and size of zeolite crystals [15].
- **Seed-assisted synthesis:** Introducing pre-formed nanocrystals as seeds promotes uniform nucleation and growth, leading to controlled particle size.
- **Post-synthesis treatments:** Techniques like milling or etching can further modify particle size and surface features [14].

By combining these methods, researchers can design zeolitic materials with specific shapes such as rods, sheets, or spheres, which impact catalytic activity and selectivity.

Composite and hybrid nanostructures: To further enhance functionality, molecular sieves can be engineered into composite or hybrid nanostructures by integrating other materials such as metal nanoparticles, metal oxides, or carbon-based nanomaterials [16-18]. These hybrids often exhibit synergistic effects that improve catalytic activity, stability, and selectivity. For example, embedding metal nanoparticles within zeolite frameworks can facilitate redox reactions alongside acid catalysis, broadening the scope of catalytic transformations.

Furthermore, the combination of zeolites with mesoporous materials creates hierarchical structures that combine micro- and mesoporosity, improving mass transport and accessibility of active sites. Hybrid nanostructures are also

tailored to enhance resistance to deactivation and to allow multifunctional catalysis, making them highly attractive for advanced catalytic applications [19-21].

Catalytic applications of molecular sieves

- Zeolite molecular sieve is a type of catalyst with amazing results. Its structure is intricate, adaptable, and has a specific pore system. ZSM-5 and Y-type zeolite molecular sieve are used in FCC reaction to obtain higher yield of gasoline, propylene and butane [22,23].
- There are numerous advantages to using MCM-22 zeolite molecular sieve in the alkylation procedure. For instance, MCM-22 works as a liquid-phase alkylation catalyst to catalyze the reaction of benzene and ethylene to produce ethylbenzene, which not only increases the selectivity of ethylbenzene but also MCM-22's own high stability and low dosage, it can be regenerated in-situ in the reactor, while other types of catalysts must be taken out of the reactor to be regenerated [24,25].
- In the synthesis reaction of short-chain alkyl substituted aromatics, MCM-56 has better activity and is not easy to deactivate [26].

- ZSM-22 is used as a catalyst in many processes, but it is mainly used in two aspects: butene skeletal isomerization and n-heptane isomerization [27].

Overall, ZSM-5, Y-type, and Beta zeolites dominate large-scale industrial catalysis due to their exceptional thermal stability, tunable acidity, and robust pore structures. ZSM-5 is especially prominent in petrochemical and methanol-to-hydrocarbon conversions, Y-type zeolite remains central to FCC and refining processes, and Beta zeolite excels in selective oxidation and alkylation. In contrast, MCM-series zeolites (MCM-22, MCM-56) are valuable for their unique activity and regeneration capabilities, making them well-suited for specialized fine chemical synthesis. Zeolitic Molecular Sieves in Acid-Catalyzed Reactions (Part A), Acid-Catalyzed reaction details (Part B) and key Advantages of Acid-Catalyzed Zeolites (Part C) are given in Table 3, Table 4 and Table 5 respectively. Zeolitic Molecular Sieves in Oxidation & Other Catalytic Reactions (Part A), Oxidation & Other Catalytic Reaction Details (Part B) and key advantages of oxidation catalysts (Part C) is provided in Table 6, Table 7 and Table 8 respectively.

TABLE 3

Zeolitic molecular sieves in acid-catalyzed reactions (Part A).

Zeolite type	Nano/micro structure	Pore size (nm)
H-ZSM-5	Nano-crystalline	0.55×0.56
Beta	Nano-structured	0.66×0.67
Mordenite	Nano-rods	0.65×0.70
SAPO-34	Nano-cube	0.38×0.38
Ferrierite	Nano-platelets	0.42×0.54

TABLE 4
Acid-catalyzed reaction details (Part B).

Catalytic application	Reactants	Products
Hydroisomerization	n-Hexane	Iso-hexane
Alkylation	Benzene + Ethylene	Ethylbenzene
Methanol-to-Hydrocarbons (MTH)	Methanol	Light olefins
Methanol-to-Olefins (MTO)	Methanol	Propylene, ethylene
Isomerization of n-butene	n-Butene	Isobutene

TABLE 5
Key advantages of acid-catalyzed zeolites (Part C).

Zeolite type	Key advantages
H-ZSM-5	High shape-selectivity, strong acidity
Beta	High activity at low temperatures
Mordenite	Thermal stability, narrow channels
SAPO-34	High selectivity to light olefins
Ferrierite	Resistance to coking

TABLE 6
Zeolitic molecular sieves in oxidation & other catalytic reactions (Part A).

Zeolite type	Nano/micro Structure	Pore Size (nm)
TS-1	Nano-titanosilicate	0.54×0.56
Cu-ZSM-5	Nano-crystalline	0.55×0.56
Fe-Beta	Nano-structured	0.66×0.67
V-MFI	Nano-crystals	0.55×0.56
Ag-Y	Nano-framework	0.74×0.74

TABLE 7
Oxidation & other catalytic reaction details (Part B).

Catalytic application	Reactants	Products
Epoxidation of alkenes	Propylene + H_2O_2	Propylene oxide
Selective Catalytic Reduction (SCR)	$\text{NO} + \text{NH}_3$	$\text{N}_2 + \text{H}_2\text{O}$
Benzene hydroxylation	Benzene + H_2O_2	Phenol
Oxidative dehydrogenation	Propane + O_2	Propylene
CO oxidation	$\text{CO} + \text{O}_2$	CO_2

TABLE 8
Key advantages of oxidation catalysts (Part C).

Zeolite type	Key advantages
TS-1	Mild reaction conditions, high selectivity
Cu-ZSM-5	High NO _x removal efficiency
Fe-Beta	Green oxidant usage
V-MFI	High propylene yield, low coke formation
Ag-Y	High low-temperature activity

Structure–property–performance relationships

A central theme in zeolitic and nanostructured molecular-sieve research is the direct linkage between atomic and nano-scale structure and macroscopic catalytic performance. Understanding these relationships enables rational design of materials with tailored activity, selectivity, and stability.

Pore topology and molecular recognition:

The topology of the zeolite framework pore size, channel dimensionality (one-, two-, or three-dimensional), and cage geometry dictates which reactants can enter, how they orient, and how transition states are stabilized. Narrow pores favor shape-selective transformations by excluding larger species or by constraining reactant conformations, which enhances product selectivity but can also limit accessibility for bulky molecules. Conversely, larger cages and interconnected meso-/macropores improve accessibility for bulky substrates at the expense of the strict shape selectivity seen in purely microporous structures [28].

Acid site type, strength, and distribution:

Catalytic activity in many zeolitic reactions is governed by Bronsted and Lewis acid sites. The Si/Al ratio, framework substitutions (e.g., heteroatoms), and ion-exchange state control acid strength and density. Strong, well-

distributed Bronsted sites promote cracking and protonation-driven transformations, but excessive acid density often accelerates coke formation and deactivation. Spatial control placing active sites near mesopore entrances or on external surfaces can optimize conversion while reducing undesired side reactions [29].

Hierarchical porosity and mass transport:

Combining microporosity with secondary meso or macroporosity (hierarchical architectures) addresses diffusion limitations intrinsic to pure microporous zeolites. Hierarchical structures shorten diffusion paths, enhance turnover for bulky molecules, and improve catalyst lifetime by facilitating removal of coke precursors. However, introducing mesopores must be balanced against possible loss of micropore-induced shape selectivity or acid-site dilution.

Crystal size, morphology and nanoscale effects:

Crystal size and external morphology affect diffusion lengths and the ratio of internal-to-external active sites. Nanosized zeolite crystals often show higher apparent activity due to shortened diffusion distances and a larger fraction of accessible sites, but they may be more prone to sintering or aggregation during use. Surface terminations and defects at the nanoscale can also create new active motifs or trap sites that modify reactivity [30].

Stability, defects and deactivation pathways:

Framework defects, extra-framework species, or imperfect crystallinity influence hydrothermal stability, acidity, and coke propensity. Water and steam can leach framework aluminum or induce dealumination, altering acidity and mechanical integrity. Understanding how synthesis conditions and post-synthetic treatments influence defect populations is therefore essential to achieve durable performance in industrial environments.

Integrative design principles: Optimizing performance requires simultaneous control of multiple structural variables pore architecture, acid-site chemistry, crystal size, and mesoporosity rather than tuning a single parameter. Multiscale characterization (spectroscopy, microscopy, adsorption/diffusion measurements) combined with kinetic testing allows designers to correlate structural signatures with performance metrics and to identify trade-offs (e.g., selectivity vs. accessibility) [31]. Such integrative approaches facilitate the targeted engineering of zeolitic and nanostructured sieves for specific catalytic tasks [32].

Challenges and future perspectives

While zeolitic molecular sieves remain central to selective catalysis, several scientific and technological challenges limit their wider application; addressing these opens clear opportunities for future research and innovation.

Challenges

- **Scalability and green synthesis:** Many advanced synthesis strategies (e.g., specialized templates, long crystallization times) are difficult or expensive to scale. Template removal and the use of organic structure-directing agents raise environmental and cost concerns.
- **Mass-transport limitations for bulky reactants:** Despite hierarchical designs, diffusion resistance remains an issue for very large molecules and in tightly packed catalyst beds.
- **Hydrothermal and mechanical stability:** Dealumination and framework collapse under steam or harsh conditions degrade activity and lifespan in some industrial settings.
- **Coke formation and regenerability:** Carbonaceous deposits reduce active-site availability and require energy-intensive regeneration; mitigating coke while maintaining selectivity is a persistent challenge.
- **Precise site localization:** Achieving atomic-level control over the placement and identity of active heteroatoms or metal clusters within specific crystallographic sites is still nontrivial.
- **Characterization under operando conditions:** Relating ex-situ structural data to true working-state structures remains difficult; active-site dynamics and transient species often escape conventional characterization.

Future perspectives and research directions

- **Sustainable and template-free routes:** Development of scalable, low-waste syntheses (template-free, solvent-minimized, or recyclable-template approaches) will be crucial for environmentally friendly manufacture.
- **Rational hierarchical engineering:** New strategies to create tailored meso-/macroporosity while retaining micropore integrity will improve performance for bulky substrates and multiphase reactors.

- **Atomic-precision site engineering:** Advanced ion-exchange, post-synthetic grafting, and single-atom deposition methods promise finely tuned active sites that maximize desired reaction pathways while minimizing side reactions.
- **Integration with computational design and machine learning:** High-throughput simulations, descriptor-driven screening, and data-driven optimization can accelerate discovery of frameworks and synthesis conditions that target specific catalytic goals [33].
- **Operando and multimodal characterization:** Combining spectroscopy, microscopy, and scattering methods under realistic reaction conditions will reveal active-site evolution and deactivation mechanisms, guiding more robust designs.
- **Multifunctional and hybrid systems:** Incorporating zeolites with metal nanoparticles, polymers, or porous supports can create tandem or multifunctional catalysts that perform sequential reactions or broaden operability.
- **Industry-relevant testing and lifecycle analysis:** More studies that evaluate catalysts at pilot or process-relevant scales, including regeneration cycles and lifecycle environmental impacts, will ease translation to commercial use.

These future directions not only aim to enhance catalytic efficiency and structural control but also directly support the principles of sustainable and green chemistry. By prioritizing low-waste synthesis, renewable feedstock compatibility, and energy-efficient catalytic processes, zeolite research can play a central role in reducing environmental impact and enabling a circular chemical economy.

Outlook: The future of zeolitic and nanostructured molecular sieves lies in converging precise structural control with sustainable synthesis and advanced characterization. By embracing hierarchical architectures, atomic-scale engineering, and data-enabled discovery, the field is well positioned to deliver next-generation catalysts that combine high selectivity, durability, and low environmental footprint meeting the demands of both traditional petrochemical processes and emerging green-chemistry applications.

Conclusion

Zeolitic molecular sieves occupy a central role in modern catalytic science, bridging fundamental structural chemistry with large-scale industrial application. Their ordered pore systems, adjustable acidity, and robust frameworks offer unmatched opportunities for shape-selective catalysis. Advances in synthesis strategies have shifted from conventional hydrothermal routes toward more sophisticated, template- and nanocasting-based methods that allow precise tuning of pore topology and active site distribution. This evolution has translated into notable improvements in catalytic efficiency, selectivity, and regenerability across processes such as FCC, alkylation, and skeletal isomerization. Future progress will likely focus on hierarchical and multifunctional designs, green synthesis approaches, and the integration of computational modeling to accelerate the discovery of next-generation zeolites. Such developments are expected to expand their role in cleaner, more energy-efficient catalytic technologies, reinforcing their importance in both industrial chemistry and sustainable development.

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